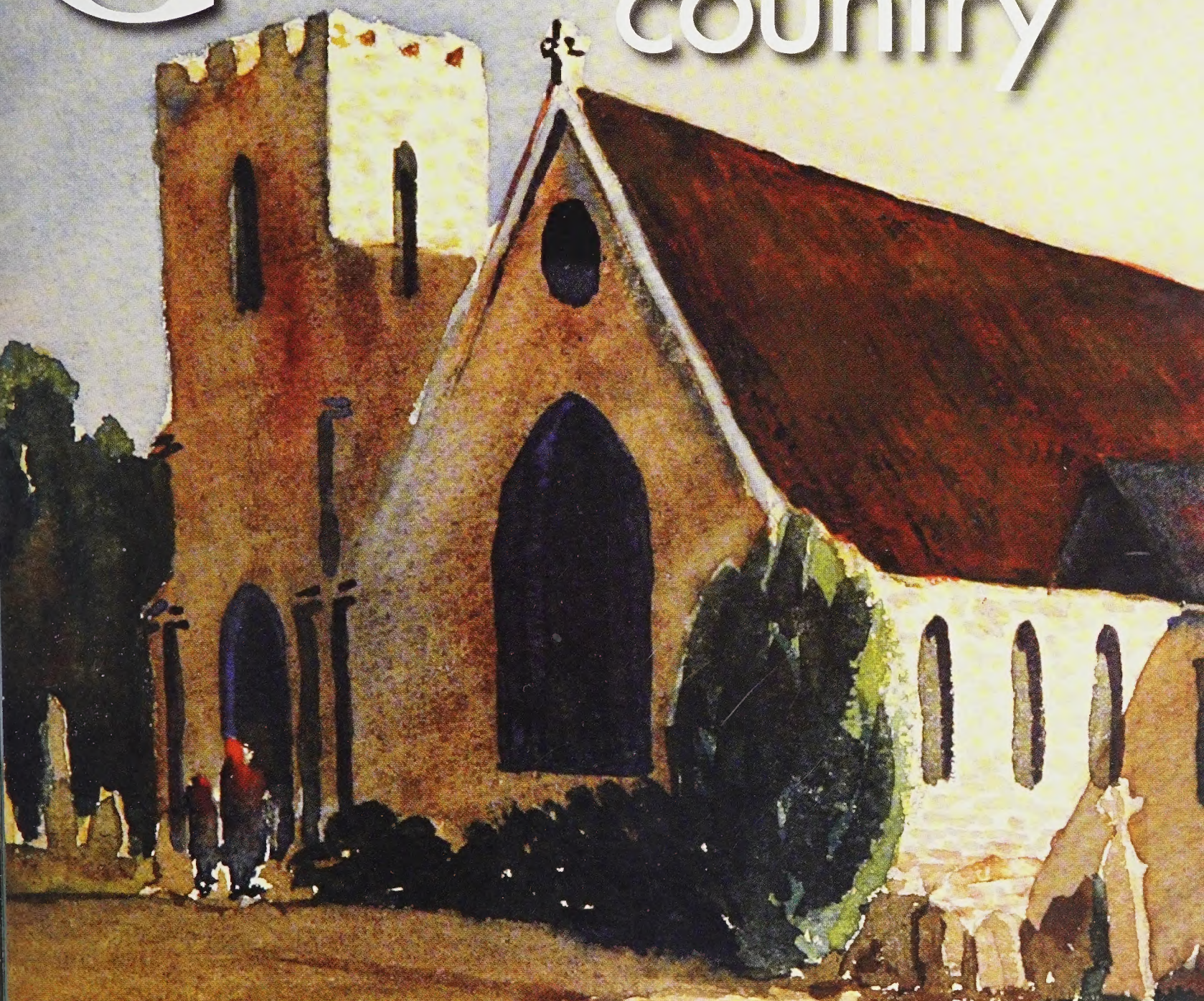


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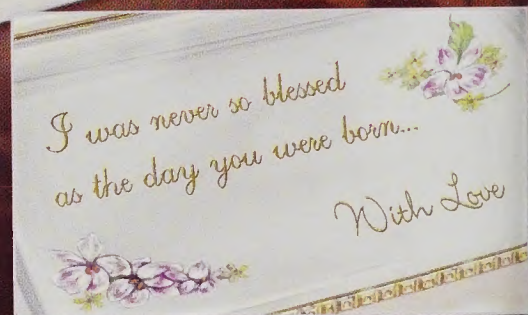
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Here's exactly what you can give to that Carolina Country fan who doesn't have these things yet.

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The lamp that wouldn't cut off, the furry spy in the closet, and other tales of technical wizardry.

On The Cover:



Grace Church, Morganton, a watercolor painting by William A. Leslie Jr. The artist's son, TV journalist and musician Bill Leslie, has published a new musical collection and book that includes a selection of 60 North Carolina-themed paintings by his dad, who died when Bill was 16. "Blue Ridge Reunion," a spiritual connection to his dad, is featured in our holiday gift guide. See pages 16–19.



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Why Do We Send You Carolina Country Magazine?

Your cooperative sends you Carolina Country as a convenient, economical way to share with its members information about services, director elections, meetings and management decisions. The magazine also carries legal notices that otherwise would be published in other media at greater cost.

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The financial storm and electric cooperatives



By Del Cranford

Has the storm in the financial world affected your electric cooperative?

The short answer is yes.

Virtually all sectors of the economy have been affected: businesses large and small, households, individuals, government, education, health care, non-profit organizations. Acquiring credit has become more difficult.

Prices for commodities already have risen and may continue to rise. Some jobs and wages may be in jeopardy. The value of savings and investments has suffered.

Your electric cooperative is like any business when it comes to buying supplies and equipment, buying wholesale electricity from both contractual arrangements and on the open market, employing people, paying benefits. The financial uncertainty has placed a squeeze on day-to-day operations. Cooperatives are paying more today than a year or two ago for wholesale electricity, gasoline for their fleets, as well as, the poles and raw materials used for electric power lines.

While no one is happy about the recent dilemma presented to the nation, electric cooperatives supported the "rescue plan" that Congress and President Bush enacted in October. Among the reasons were these:

- The electricity industry depends upon the credit markets to provide funds for the extensive infrastructure that is the building block of our electricity sector. If capital is unavailable, long-term reliability will suffer and if capital is scarce, interest costs will go up substantially.
- Electric cooperatives must finance a distribution system that covers 76 percent of the nation. Rising interest costs will add to already sharply rising electricity prices for consumers.
- Electric cooperatives have contracts with the trading operations of the

same banks that Congress sought to stabilize.

- The vast majority of America's electric cooperatives provide benefits and retirement plans for more than 55,000 employees. These benefits enhance good jobs and provide stability and retirement security to the communities cooperatives serve.

One major difference between your cooperative and other utility businesses is that a cooperative operates on a not-for-profit basis. After meeting its obligations and setting aside prudent reserves, a cooperative returns "dividends" to members. But simply meeting business obligations has become more expensive because of the current financial downturn.

Another major difference about the cooperative way of doing business is the cooperative's number one priority: you. Cooperatives exist solely to provide a service for their members—in our case safe, reliable and affordable electricity. These days, the "affordable" mission takes plenty of careful planning and good business practices.

A recent report from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association paints an interesting picture of the household income of cooperative members. The typical U.S. electric cooperative is composed of members with a per capita income of \$21,435. This is 21 percent lower than the national average per capita income of \$27,260. Cooperative board members and managers know that rate increases can have a serious impact on their members. That's why they continually work on your behalf locally, at the state level and nationally to ensure that any measures or policies affecting the utility business will have the least possible economic impact on consumers.

You may be interested to know, however, that the most recent analysis


of electric cooperatives reveals a very sound financial situation.

The National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation (CFC) this summer published results of its 2007 Key Ratio Trend Analysis (KRTA), an annual assessment of financial trends among electric cooperatives nationwide. The report concludes that electric cooperatives remain financially solid despite rising costs, particularly power costs.

The 2007 KRTA report, based on data submitted by 820 electric cooperatives, showed that although the growth in power generation costs outpaced growth in revenue, the increases were moderate. Electric cooperatives, which currently serve 12 percent of the U.S. population, also registered higher growth rates in new member-consumers and in kilowatt-hour (kwh) sales than the industry average.

Cooperatives added a total of 409,000 households to their lines in 2007, an increase of almost 3 percent, nearly double the average growth for the entire electric utility industry in 2006. Additionally, the average cooperative-served household showed a significant increase in monthly use of electricity, attributable, at least in part, to the growing use of consumer electronic products now found in rural homes. Our consistent growth, as well as prudent business practices, allow electric cooperatives to maintain their sound financial footing.

Despite the many challenges they face, your cooperatives continue to do an excellent job of keeping the power on for you. The KRTA report said power was available to cooperative members 99.96 percent of the time in 2007.

So bottom line: while your electric cooperative will take some blows during this financial storm, we are operating from a sound financial foundation, and we pledge to continue delivering safe, reliable electricity to you at the most affordable cost possible. 

Delbert Cranford, a board member of Randolph Electric Membership Corporation based in Asheboro, is also a member of the board of directors of the National Rural Utilities Cooperative Finance Corporation. He lives in southwest Randolph County.



My solar bathhouse

I am trying to save energy with my "bread box" water heater. It has a black water tank inside a south-facing glass enclosure. The north wall is solid. It's like what happens in a car with its windshield facing the sun. I enjoy a nice hot bath. I built it myself, and I am 75.

Georgia Muller, Norwood

Making Thanksgiving memorable

I agreed with my parents when they openly expressed sadness that their only grandchildren lived clear across the state in the mountains of North Carolina. Because we lived so far away, rarely did we celebrate Thanksgiving together, saving our money and vacation time for a longer traditional Christmas holiday.

I desperately tried to re-create the memories of Thanksgivings past for my two young girls. But even though I cooked the turkey and made the dressing the way my grandmother had, I could not re-create my memories for them. So I began making new traditions and new memories for our family.

I made an announcement about a week before Thanksgiving: "This year, each of you can choose your favorite dish for our Thanksgiving meal."

What fun the girls and even my husband had choosing their favorite food. And what an eclectic meal developed! On Thanksgiving Day, when other families carved the turkey and buttered the mashed potatoes, we said grace to steamed shrimp, collards, meat loaf and pecan pie. Maybe not for all, but for us it was the best meal we had ever shared. Thus began our own family tradition and our own unique holiday memories.

Jan Graham, Spruce Pine

How to handle the gasoline lines

Yesterday I drove from my house in the Stallings/Hemby Bridge area over to Belmont to pick up some merchandise at the Pico Antique Mall. Along the way I saw numerous gas stations with NO GAS. I had about a quarter of a tank in my big conversion van and thought I would wait until I got to Belmont to a favorite station there. But it, too, was out of gas. I went to three other stations, and they were all out of gas.

Finally, I saw the Belmont Walmart on Hwy. 74 up on a hill, and they had a long line of cars waiting to get gas. I got in the back of the very long line and realized that it was moving along very quickly. (I had been in the Crown Point Walmart earlier in the week and had to wait for an hour and a half.)

When I got up close to the station, there was a young woman, directing the cars to which pump was appropriate for their vehicle: right-side tank or left-side tank. This made the line move much faster, and there were no fights over breaking in line, nor any of the ugliness that I have experienced at other stations.

Someone there told me that the woman did not work for Walmart and had been there for two and a half hours just helping to keep things moving.

On the way out of the parking lot, I asked her name and she said Carla Sanders. I don't know where she lives, or anything else about her, but a huge THANK YOU to Carla for being such a good citizen by saving us time, confusion and for being so caring.

Anne L. McDaniel, Indian Trail

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A more economical solar electric plant that leaves a small footprint

An electric cooperative and a solar energy developer, both based in Hillsborough, are making progress toward lowering the cost of solar-generated electricity. On a brilliantly sunny October day in Caswell County, Piedmont Electric and MegaWatt Solar dedicated a solar electric plant that is the first of its kind anywhere.

Michael E.C. Gery



Piedmont EMC in October introduced its new Caswell County solar electric power plant, designed and built by MegaWatt Solar of Hillsborough.

By year's end, the crop of solar "trees," as they're known, will send some 50 kilowatts of electric power into the grid system while the sun is shining. Each of the units generates about enough power to supply a residence, said Chris Clemens, an astrophysicist with UNC-Chapel Hill and executive vice president of MegaWatt Solar. Speaking at the dedication, Clemens also explained some distinctive features of the facility. Describing it as a small power plant, the set of "trees" are composed of convex mirrors that can concentrate solar energy 20 times more effectively than conventional solar electric or photovoltaic cells. A computer program moves the collector panels during the day to receive optimal solar exposure and also will automatically face the arrays upward to escape affects from high winds.

Piedmont Electric, the Touchstone Energy cooperative that serves approximately 30,000 member-consumers in Alamance, Caswell, Durham, Granville, Orange and Person counties, partnered on the project as a means of demonstrating renewable energy technology for electric utilities as well as to send such electricity to the grid to offset the use of higher-cost power during peak demand times. "We are committed to moving ahead with a balanced approach to power supply," said R.G. "Randy" Brecheisen, CEO of the cooperative. "New technologies and energy efficiency are very important to us, and we encourage our member-consumers to work with us to use energy efficiently."

MegaWatt Solar's CEO Dan Gregory pointed out that these facilities represent a new model of smaller power plants that can generate electricity economically and environmentally safely. Such small installations do not take up vast real estate—the 8-foot-wide arrays are mounted on 12-foot-tall bases. A community of them can be spread over a region so that if heavily clouded skies or a storm closes one down, another one not far away could remain operating.

The solar cells use 95 percent less silicon and only fully developed materials, components and subsystems which are already in use. The available silicon cell technology uses no exotic materials, Gregory said, and depends on existing low-cost, field-proven, composite aluminum mirror materials.

The solar electric plant is located on Rascoe Dameron Rd. near Piedmont Electric's district office in Caswell County.

For more information about the technology, visit www.megawattsolar.com

Try This!

Q: Do insulated shades and other insulated window covering products cut home heating costs?

A: Insulated shades and other window coverings do save energy by reducing the heating load in homes, but the savings will depend on the location and orientation of the house, the state of the existing windows, the age of the house, etc.

Window coverings exist in many styles, but typically use increased insulation and higher R-values to reduce heat loss. The Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy Program Web site provides a great overview of the many different types and their characteristics. For example, window draperies "can reduce heat loss from a warm room up to 10%," according to the DOE Web site.

The Smart Energy Living Web site is also a great source of information and provides R-values for many types of thermal window coverings.

The cells of a honeycomb shade actually trap the cold air, decreasing the intensity of the temperature as it enters the room. And this, in turn, helps minimize the amount of heat that's drawn toward your windows. Honeycomb shades have R-values between 2.0 and 4.8.

Window quilts offer air and moisture-tight fabric along with 4-sided seals. Quilts have an R-value of 4.99.

Draperies and Roman shades can be thermally lined to increase efficiency. R-values range from 3.0 to 5.0, with actual R-values dependent on fabric, lining and pleating.

Hardwood shutters and wood blinds offer R-values between 2.77 and 3.17.

Source: Cooperative Research Network.

Can you help others save energy?

Send your conservation ideas or questions to us.

P.O.Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611,
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WHERE IN CAROLINA COUNTRY IS THIS? ➔



This is a Carolina Country scene in Touchstone Energy territory. If you know where it is, send your answer by November 5 with your name, address, phone number and the name of your electric cooperative.

By e-mail: where@carolinacountry.com

Or by mail: Where in Carolina Country?
P.O. Box 27306
Raleigh, NC 27611

The winner, chosen at random and announced in our December issue, will receive \$25.

October winner:

The October picture, by Robin Webster of Davidson County, showed The Chapel of Peace at Hart Square in Catawba County. Dr. Robert Hart over the years has moved and reconstructed some 60 buildings to create this private collection showcasing an 1840s village. Debra Garrou of Valdese told us, "The chapel is an original log Episcopal church that was moved from Whitnel to Hart Square in 1998. My mother, my husband and I first discovered Hart Square last year through a client, Harold Hildebran, and fell in love with the 1800's village that Dr. Hart has diligently recreated. Once a year [last Saturday in October] the village is open to the public with actual re-enactments of tin smithing, molasses making, book binding, woodstove cooking, hair pin lace making and so many other activities to observe." The correct answers were numbered, and the \$25 winner chosen at random was Jeremy V. Barbee of Oakboro, a member of Union Power Cooperative.



Touchstone Energy helps 4-H students learn about citizenship and government

North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives sponsored more than 100 North Carolina 4-H students to attend the Citizenship North Carolina Focus conference in Raleigh during June. The 4-H'ers attended workshops, participated in panel discussions, listened to distinguished speakers and met with their legislators. The 4-H'ers also learned ways they could put citizenship into action in their own communities.

Nelle Hotchkiss, senior vice president of corporate relations, and Andrew Meehan, manager of government affairs, represented North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives and conducted workshops. Hotchkiss led a workshop called "What Are Your Issues" where the youths were encouraged to brainstorm ideas for addressing problems in their communities. Meehan's workshop, "Putting Your Best Foot Forward," trained the 4-H youth on how to professionally present themselves when meeting with their legislators.

Many of the 4-H youth sent notes of appreciation to North Carolina's Touchstone Energy cooperatives, including these.


This 4-H Citizenship North Carolina Focus conference has been three days I will never forget. I learned so much about the state's government, met so many new friends, and got the chance to do and take part in some amazing events. I know that I would not have been able to have this extraordinary experience without your help. I really appreciate all that you've done to touch countless 4-H'ers' lives.
Elizabeth Treacy,
Granville County

This is my second year attending this event and I thoroughly enjoyed it. I learned more about my state government and my legislators. Thanks again so much for making this possible.
Kellie Hatley, Stanly County

I personally learned a lot about being a good citizen, and the state government at Citizenship Focus in Raleigh.
Dedra Garner, Pitt County



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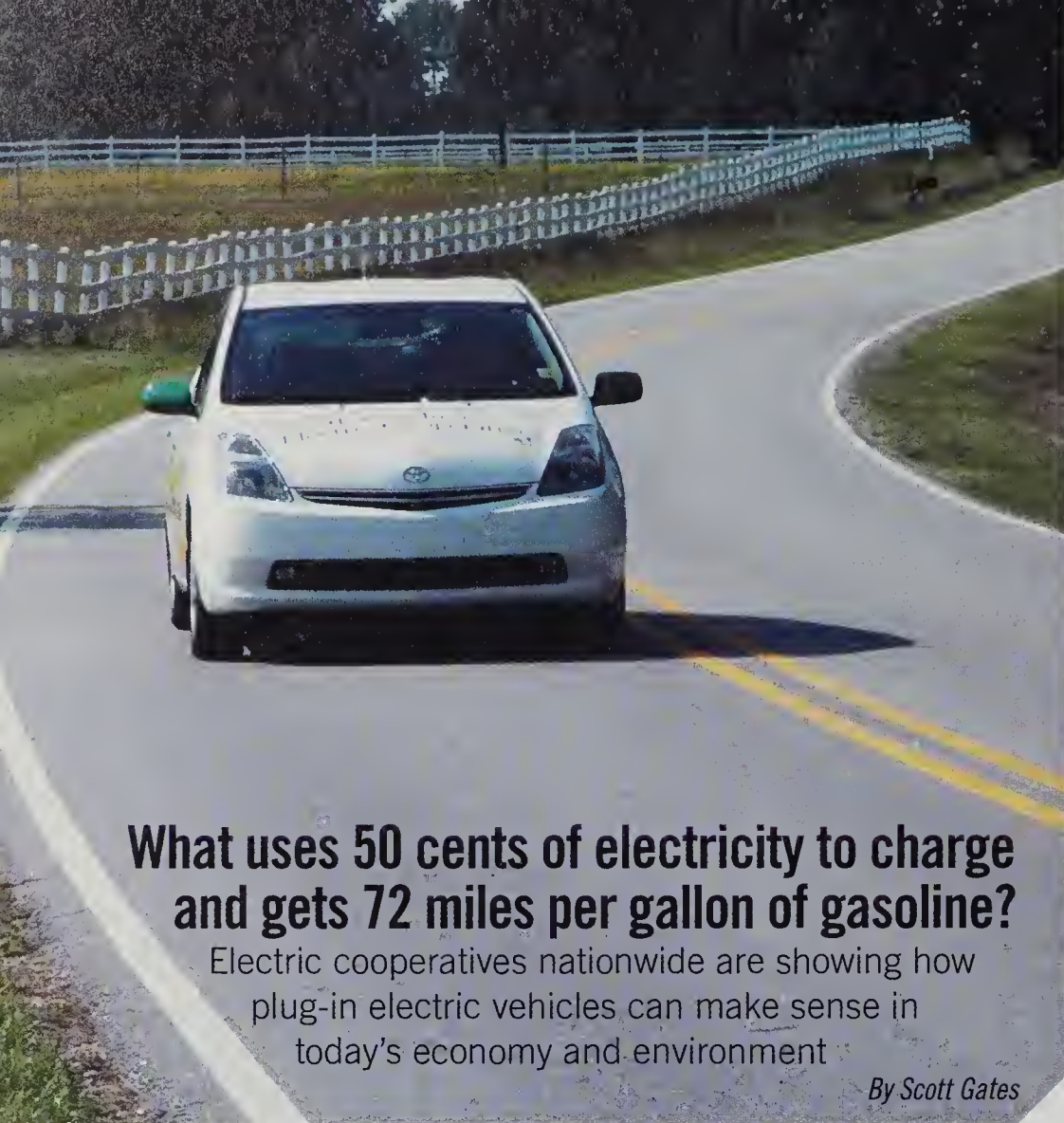


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What uses 50 cents of electricity to charge and gets 72 miles per gallon of gasoline?

Electric cooperatives nationwide are showing how plug-in electric vehicles can make sense in today's economy and environment

By Scott Gates

Today, a small fleet of specialized electric cooperative demonstration vehicles, drawing on the power of both gasoline and electricity, is wheeling down rural roads. Under optimum conditions, they can travel 150 miles on each gallon of gasoline.

Sound far-fetched? The Cooperative Research Network (CRN), an arm of Arlington, Va.-based National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, has been studying these cars, called plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs), for nearly two years. The U.S. Department of Energy's Idaho National Laboratory and seven electric co-ops across the country have joined the effort, with a plan for 10 cars to hit the road by the end of this year.

"Part of the program is gaining real world data on what it's like to drive one of these vehicles day to day, and part of it is public outreach," explains Alan Shedd, who logged 45,000 miles in a plug-in as a commercial-industrial marketing engineer at Jackson Electric Membership Corporation in Jefferson, Ga. Shedd picked up the co-op's PHEV, a retrofitted 2004 Toyota Prius painted two-tone green and white, from a

conversion shop outside Los Angeles in February 2007.

He adds: "You can't really drive anywhere without people asking about it. It's kind of flashy—especially with '100+ mpg' painted right above the gas tank."

In its study, CRN hopes to determine how PHEVs will perform as part of an electric co-op fleet. Any positive attention co-ops enjoy as a result provides an unexpected bonus.

"It's really great that electric cooperatives got involved in this technology early on," says Shedd. "Participating co-ops deserve a lot of credit for getting out there and making this initiative happen."

The public exposure Shedd and others provide by displaying one of the cars at co-op meetings, fairs and other community events also lets them explain what PHEVs actually do. Today's hybrid cars, which automakers are now offering, achieve greater fuel efficiency by adding an electric motor and 1.3-kilowatt-hour nickel-metal hydride battery that takes over for the gasoline engine at low speeds. The gas engine kicks on during long cruises, or when the battery gets used up. Both the gas engine and a

regenerative braking system constantly recharge the battery pack.

Plug-in hybrids, though, take the idea a step further by replacing the nickel-metal hydride battery with a 9-kilowatt-hour lithium-ion model—a much larger version of those used in cell phones and laptops—that delivers more electric power and better fuel economy. You charge the vehicle by plugging it into a conventional outlet.

When the battery runs down to where a one-third charge remains, the PHEV starts acting like a regular hybrid, using the gasoline engine to maintain that level. But the engine and brakes don't recharge the battery much further. Instead, a full charge requires the regular 110-volt outlet.

Before being converted to a plug-in, Shedd's off-the-shelf hybrid averaged 45 to 50 miles per gallon. He now gets 75 to 90 mpg driving the same routes. On trips in-town of less than 20 miles, the car can average between 120 and 150 mpg.

"When plugged in, a PHEV can recharge in four hours," says Ed Torrero, CRN executive director. "Doing so consumes around 4 kilowatt-hours, or about 40 cents, of electricity. It's cheaper to fully recharge the battery this way than charging it with the gasoline engine."

Charging can also be done at night, when demand for electricity is low and, in some cases, rates are lowered to reflect this. A PHEV can run on the equivalent of \$1 per gallon for gas—a price not seen in this country since February 1999.

Displacing carbon emissions

While pocketbook advantages to drivers are obvious, plug-ins also offer the promise of reduced reliance on imported oil and lower greenhouse gas emissions. Combined, electricity generation and transportation account for close to three-quarters of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, blamed as a principal contributor to climate change.

Even in a scenario where few changes are made to the nation's current electric generation mix—with coal continuing to provide about half of all power produced—widespread adoption of PHEVs could reduce

carbon dioxide emissions by as much as 500 million metric tons a year by 2050, according to a recent study by the Palo Alto, Calif.-based Electric Power Research Institute, a non-profit research consortium for electric utilities, and the National Resources Defense Council in New York City. That's equal to permanently taking more than one-third of cars off the nation's roads.

At the moment, plug-in hybrid electric vehicle development remains hampered by costs and still-evolving battery technology. Nickel-metal hydride batteries, for their part, are plagued by low energy density—the charge held relative to size.

On the other hand, lithium-ion batteries, such as those being deployed by CRN, are not yet proven. However, a report by the California Air Resources Board found them “making impressive technical progress worldwide,” especially in regards to longevity and safety.

Another technical hurdle involves electric utilities' ability to handle a surge of electric-driven cars. If PHEVs are charged during times of low electricity demand, the current power grid could “fuel” as many as 180 million without the need for new generation, according to the U.S. Department of Energy Pacific Northwest National Laboratory in Richland, Wash. But a rapid and more widespread adoption of the technology could severely strain distribution systems, such as those owned and maintained by your local electric co-op.

“Plug-ins have the potential to create the greatest end-use product, and greatest challenge, for electric utilities since air conditioning was introduced in the 1950s,” says CRN's Torrero. “Air conditioning load grew much faster than expected and caught a lot of utilities unprepared. This research project is contributing to an early understanding of the technology so we can avoid any similar unintended consequences.”

When driving his PHEV, Alan Shedd in Georgia often fields questions along these lines. A popular concern is: if everyone on my block drives a plug-in hybrid, and comes home from work and plugs in at the same time, won't we have brownouts?

“In my opinion, it's a non-issue,” says Shedd. “In recharging, the car draws less energy than a hairdryer. And we don't have brownouts in the morning when everyone is getting ready for work, drying their hair, and making coffee.”

Jackson EMC recently retired its PHEV when the odometer reached 103,000 miles, and Shedd has since moved on to work as a regional manager with the National Rural Electric

Cooperative Association. But wanting to continue his participation with CRN, Shedd “put his money where his mouth is” and bought the car from the co-op. **E**

Scott Gates writes on technology and energy efficiency for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association, the Arlington, Va.-based service arm of the nation's 900-plus consumer-owned, not-for-profit electric cooperatives.



That Pender County Plug-in Prius

Four County Electric Membership Corp. in Pender County was one of the nation's first cooperatives to convert a hybrid vehicle into a plug-in electric vehicle. The conversion was completed last year by Hymotion, a conversion module manufacturer, and Advanced Vehicle Research Center, an automotive research and development company in Raleigh. Facilitated by Advanced Energy in Raleigh, the conversion took about four hours.

Since then, Dan Allen, vice president of customer services with Four County EMC, has driven the vehicle on his 50-mile one-way commute to work.

“I average around 72 miles per gallon when I start with a full battery,” he says. To fully charge the battery takes about 50 cents of electricity, with which the Toyota Prius can run about 40 miles before the gasoline engine kicks in.

“The car handles well and is fast enough to run the Interstate,” Allen says. “It has good room once you get in the vehicle. The dash performance display will make you more aware of how you are driving, since it gives you immediate feedback on gas mileage.”

Allen says the Four County Toyota turns a lot of heads, mainly because of its display of decals. The cooperative has sent out the car for public demonstrations.

Would he buy one of these and have it converted? “Not yet,” Allen says. “The battery packs need to offer a little more mileage, and the expense of conversion continues to be a little high if you are doing this for an economical reason.”

According to the Plug-In Hybrid Coalition of the Carolinas, about 150 plug-in hybrids are on the nation's roads today.

The North Carolina Electric Membership Corporation, which supplies wholesale power and other services to the state's electric cooperatives, recently added a PHEV to its fleet. (Shown on page 12.) “It's exciting to join Four County and other co-ops across the nation to be on the leading edge of a movement like this,” says Bob Goodson, CEO of the cooperatives' GreenCo Solutions statewide co-op. “In the U.S., plug-in hybrids have the potential to reshape energy use and curb greenhouse gas emissions in a very positive way.”

For more information about plug-in hybrid conversion:

www.avrc.com
www.a123systems.com/hymotion



“We believe in what we’re doing”

Ronnie Hunt leaves a legacy of caring for the Lumbee River EMC community

By Michael E.C. Gery

When he steps into retirement in January, Ronnie Hunt will leave an electric cooperative that faces many of the same issues it faced when he started as general manager nearly 27 years ago: rising energy prices, new efficiency programs, too much reliance on foreign energy supplies, economic hard times for member-consumers.

Fortunately for Lumbee River Electric Membership Corporation, the cooperative is not only better off this time, but also will be piloted by a new CEO/president who has been with LREMC nearly as long as Ronnie Hunt has. Hunt handed over the helm of Lumbee River to Randall Jones in September and had been guiding him through a transition since May. “He has the right personality for this work,” Hunt said. “He knows our membership, our employees, our board. As long as he and the employees keep the member as their first priority, and keep the service what it is, he’ll do all right.”

Ronnie E. Hunt joined LREMC as a jack-of-all-trades office manager in 1976, became interim general manager in 1981 and in 1983 was appointed general manager. “When I took over,” he remembered, “there was a member uprising. We had the highest rates of anyone around us. We had just started a load management program that people did not understand. There was a petition to recall the entire board of directors. We were in the newspapers just about every day.”

How did this native son of Robeson County handle it?

Born to sharecropper parents in the farm country between Fairmont and

Rowland, Ronnie Hunt began college at UNC-Pembroke in the late 1960s, but after a year there, “I decided to fool everybody. I volunteered for four years in the Army, then volunteered for two and a half years in Vietnam.” He worked with Army Security in Vietnam (“so I can’t tell you everything I worked on”), stationed mostly in Lao Cai. He re-upped for two more tours because he could do something more interesting than the stateside “routine of spit-shine boots, creases in your pants, all that good stuff.” Discharged as a staff sergeant, he left all his military trappings at the California warehouse when he arrived, so as not to be labeled as a “killer of women and children,” as may have happened in some places. He completed his studies and earned a B.S. degree in accounting at Pembroke. Then he worked with Southern National Bank before joining LREMC, where there were close to 20,000 members, and a vocal group of them was not happy.

His approach to the member unrest in the early 1980s was to listen to their concerns. “They were members just like anyone else. If any member asks for time to be heard, you let them be heard. Otherwise you lose the idea of what a co-op is all about.” He also reduced the size of the staff, cut fat from spending programs, and held rates steady for the next 15 years.


Now, with more than 53,000 member-accounts, Hunt sees a similar situation. “There will always be a core group of members in their 50s who are watching things closely: your rates, your service, your board, your staff. They deserve your attention.”

These days LREMC has seen a collapse of the region’s textile manufacturing industry, a large influx of Hispanic immigrants, and increasing economic hardship in one of the poorest areas of the state (Robeson, Hoke and Scotland counties). The co-op has led the way in shoring up the economic base. In 1998, Hunt was instrumental

in forming a partnership with schools and government that became the COMtech park on 600 acres in Robeson County. It grew into a training center surrounded by an industrial park, which has received millions of dollars in business development investments and created more than 1,000 jobs. A crowning achievement of his career, the project earned LREMC the 2006 National Community Service award from the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

Even so, Ronnie Hunt sees rough roads ahead for many LREMC members. Rates inevitably will rise as the co-op faces increasing wholesale power, gasoline and equipment costs, not to mention legislative mandates to institute efficiency and renewable energy programs. “Some people can stretch a dollar only so far. Some may get cut off because they can’t pay higher electric bills, and they may not be able to come back on. They are right now having to decide between food, clothing, medicine.” He added that some will “come screaming and hollering at us, because they can, it’s their co-op, and we will listen and do whatever we can.”

Ronnie Hunt believes that the co-op way of business—where cooperatives work together, sharing information and resources—will be their strength during hard times. “And so will employees,” he added, “because we believe in what we’re doing, in doing something for our community. If members have to sacrifice, co-op employees will step up for them.”

In retirement, Ronnie Hunt will see more of his sons, Corey and Chad, his granddaughters, and his mother (“giving back to her a little bit of what she gave me”). His wife, Phyllis, who works at UNC-Pembroke, is waiting to see how she likes her husband at home all the time before she decides when to retire. Otherwise, Ronnie Hunt will be out there doing what else he does best: hunting, fishing and playing golf. 

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THE Carolina Country STORE

2008 Gift Guide



Burchfield's Golf Gallery

Purveyors of fine golf products, Burchfield's sells a large assortment of unique items for golfers and collectors. Based in the village of Pinehurst since 1986, Burchfield's inventory includes paintings, limited edition fine art, sculptures, lamps, pillows, rugs and custom ball and club displays. The gallery is owned and operated by Sally and Tim Gold, who have a hands-on philosophy toward their business. Their categories include funny, framed art, such as the snow print entitled "Finding the Ball Is Half The Battle" and a sign with the words "Born To Golf. Forced to Work." in gold lettering. Display cases range in price, from one to show off golf pencils for \$39 to a golf club shadowbox, available in red mahogany or natural oak, for \$275.

Burchfield's Golf Gallery

80 Magnolia Road, P.O. Box 1585, Pinehurst, NC, 28374
(800) 358-4066 | www.burchfields.com

Glass ornaments and bottles

These glass ornaments and perfume bottles are made by master glass-blowers in a 3,500-year-old Egyptian village who shape them freehand, not with molds. They use high-quality German Pyrex. Craftsmen made intricate 16-karat gold designs with floral etching and hand painting. See the entire collection online.

Trejour

(970) 247-3916 | www.trejour.com

Bertie County Peanuts

Bertie County Peanuts began with Poppa Jack and his famous "blister fried" peanuts. The crunchy, fresh peanut taste was a huge hit with our local experts—peanut farmers themselves. Today, Bertie County Peanuts offers a variety of peanut snacks and treats. From our Blister Fried and Chocolate Dipped peanuts to our new line of spicy snacks, you can find gifts for everyone on your list. Call for a free brochure.

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217 US 13 North, Windsor, NC 27983
(866) 233-7688 | www.pnuts.net

Southern Highland Guild Crafts

To become a member of the Southern Highland Guild, craftspeople must pass a rigorous jury process, and the happy result is the Guild's quality crafts. The Guild sells its members' one-of-a-kind pieces, made from glass, clay, fiber, metal, mixed media, natural materials, paper and wood, through its Web site and designated stores located in Appalachian states. In North Carolina, shoppers can purchase guild crafts at Parkway Craft Center in Blowing Rock (Milepost 294 on the Blue Ridge Parkway), the Guild Shop in Asheville (Highway 70) and the Folk Art Center (Milepost 382), also in Asheville. The Folk Art Center, which is headquarters for the Southern Highland Guild, houses Allanstand Craft Shop, the oldest continuously operating crafts shop in the country. The contemporary facility features exhibition galleries and an arts and crafts library open to the public as well. Guild pieces available at shops and online include holiday luminaries, decorative wine corks, cornshuck dolls, wooden toys, birdhouses, ironwork, water pitchers, handbags, wall hangings, journals, baskets and jewelry.

Folk Art Center

Blue Ridge Parkway Milepost 382, Asheville, NC 28805
(828) 298-7903 | www.southernhighlandguild.org



North Carolina gift baskets

Based in Lewisville, NCGiftBaskets.com specializes in pretty gift baskets filled with gourmet items made in North Carolina and offers other choices as well. You can build your own gift basket online, choose a pre-made basket, or let the folks at NCGiftBaskets.com design one for you. Products to choose from include candles, collegiate-themed coffee mugs and items for bath and body, pets and infants. Themed baskets include creative offerings for coffee and pet lovers. The Carolina Dreaming Spa Basket has a bath pillow, terry spa flip flops, 8-ounce bubble bath, 16-ounce Dead Sea bath salts, sauna bath brush, body scrub, bath sponge and body lotion and comes in a wrought iron and bamboo magazine rack. It sells for \$66.99.

NCGiftBaskets.com

1590 Williams Road, Lewisville, NC 27023
(866) 624-4381 | www.ncgiftbaskets.com

Westmoore Pottery

Founded in 1977 by potters David and Mary Farrell, Westmoore turns out a wide selection of functional, attractive redware, salt-glazed stone and green glazed pottery. The Farrells, who are members of Randolph Electric Membership Corporation, say they aim to achieve as close a look to old wares as possible without using lead glazes. Their historical, replica wares are created on premises, with the look and feel of pottery from the 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries. Pieces can be found in several museum collections. Westmoore also sells handcrafted pewter and hand-blown glass. Prices range from \$2.50 up to \$600, with a large number of pieces in the \$20-\$100 range.

Westmoore Pottery

4622 Busbee Road, Seagrove, NC 27341
(910) 464-3700 | www.westmoorepottery.com

The Chocolate House

The Chocolate House, a specialty shop in Elizabeth City, sells hand-dipped French chocolates. Sweets for sale include fresh fudge, truffles, turtles, clusters, Granny Smith apples dipped in chocolate and caramel and chocolate-covered pretzels. (Not to mention chocolate-dipped Twinkies.) Gift baskets for personal and corporate occasions are available as well. Shop founder and owner Kathy Dowdy also sells a special candy bar she created in honor of her town, the Elizabeth City Candy Bar. The four-ounce gourmet bar features the city seal and Elizabeth City attributes. Available in white, milk and dark varieties, it's made on site and sells for 4.99.

The Chocolate House

217 N. Water Street, Elizabeth City, NC 27909
(252) 334-9YUM (9986) | www.thechocolatehouseinc.com

Sneads Ferry Sneakers

Sneads Ferry Sneakers has attire and prints that make perfect just-for-fun gifts. Shown here is the unique coastal image of the fishing boots designed by Sherry Thurston of Sneads Ferry. "Adults and kids love to wear them!" Featured left to right are a hat for \$12.95, and adult tee-shirt for \$16.95 (small to large), a youth tee-shirt for \$11.95, totes with a handy side pocket for \$15.95, and the 8-by-10-inch giclee print for \$35. See more online.

Sneads Ferry Sneakers, Thurston Art Gallery

328 Peru Road, Sneads Ferry, NC 28460
(910) 327-1781 | www.sneadsferrysneakersonline.com





The Big Book of North Carolina Barbecue

North Carolina is home to the longest continuous barbecue tradition on the North American mainland. Authoritative, spirited and opinionated, "Holy Smoke," by John Shelton Reed and Dale Volberg Reed with William McKinney, explores the lore, recipes, traditions and people who have helped shape North Carolina's signature slow-food dish.

"Sure to be a favorite with folks who love the Tar Heel state and its history and foodways," said Metro Magazine.

"Sheer fun. . . Informative, fast-paced, thorough, and filled with facts," said Jack Betts, The Charlotte Observer.

"Even if it didn't taste so good, we would like North Carolina barbecue for its inspirational nature," said Jane and Michael Stern of Roadfood.com.

With 328 pages and 61 sidebars, it's \$30 in hardcover at bookstores.

The University of North Carolina Press

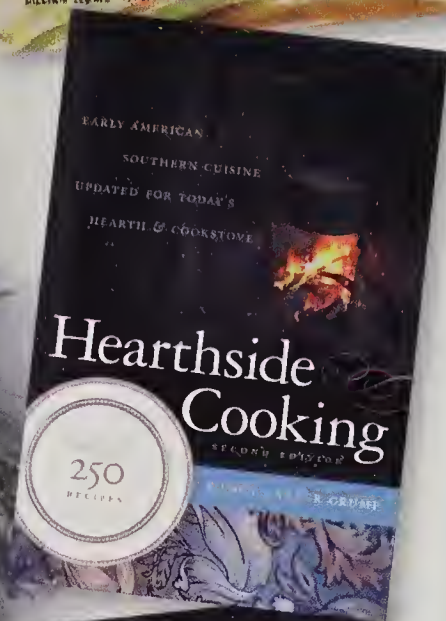
116 South Boundary Street, Chapel Hill, NC 27514-3808
(800) 848-6224 | www.uncpress.unc.edu



Blue Ridge watercolors, essays and music

Through different media, "Blue Ridge Reunion" conveys a vibrant 20th century snapshot of life in western North Carolina. In his new book, award-winning journalist and highly ranked Celtic/folk musician Bill Leslie reveals his quest for a spiritual reunion with his dad. His artist father died suddenly when Bill was 16, and Bill's nostalgic essays and poems are coupled with his dad's majestic watercolors. The senior Leslie's images range from alluring landscapes to weathered, bonnet-clad faces. Bill weaves tales of moonshiners, gold fever, an early brush with death and the Cherokee Indians' Trail of Tears. The companion CD by the same name features 14 of Bill's original melodies, including "Water of Life," "Moses Owl" and "Climb That Mountain." The coffee-table book, published by 2D Designs, Inc. of Raleigh, has 124 pages and sells for \$25. The companion CD, published by Greycliff Music/ASCAP, sells for \$15.

(919) 821-8606 | www.billleslie.com



"Hearthside Cooking"

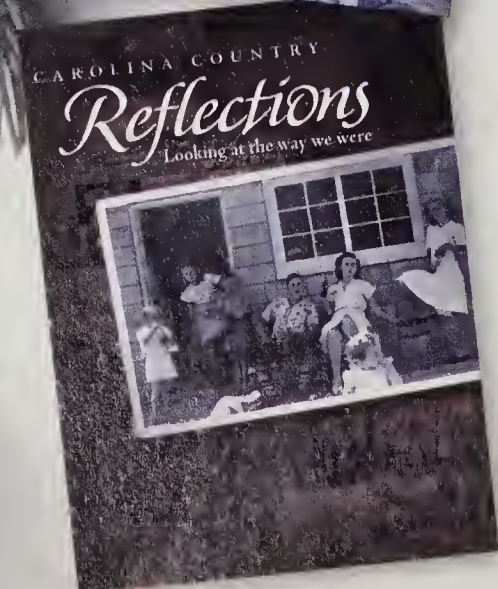
"Hearthside Cooking: Early American Southern Cuisine Updated for Today's Hearth and Cookstove," offers 21st-century cooks a resource for traditional cooking. It contains recipes for more than 250 historic dishes, including breads, soups, entrées, cakes, custards, sauces and more. For each, Nancy Carter Crump provides two sets of instructions, so dishes can be prepared over the open fire or using modern kitchen appliances. With this new edition, Crump includes additional information on African American foodways, how the Civil War affected traditional southern food customs, and the late-19th-century transition from hearth to stove cooking.

"A delightful resource for historians and cooks alike," said Patricia Brady, author of "Nelly Custis Lewis's Housekeeping Book and Martha Washington: An American Life."

With 352 pages and 55 illustrations, it's \$30 in hardcover at bookstores.

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"Carolina Country Reflections"

This special, limited-edition book offers more than 220 photographs by Carolina Country magazine readers depicting life in rural North Carolina before 1970, including poignant scenes and stories of families, farms, fun times and everyday life. Hardcover, 160 pages. The price of \$35 includes free shipping and handling. The book is available at bookstores. You can also order it online through Carolina Country's Web site, by mail with check to Carolina Country. Also available through John F. Blair, Publisher in Winston-Salem.

Carolina Country

P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611
www.CarolinaCountry.com

John F. Blair, Publisher

(800) 222-9796 | www.blairpub.com

"The North Carolina Birding Trail"

These guidebooks take you on the North Carolina Birding Trail—a driving trail linking great birding sites across the state. Two versions are now published: the Coastal Plan Trail Guide and Piedmont Trail Guide. The Mountain Trail Guide will be available in spring 2009.

The trail physically links great bird watching sites and birders with communities, businesses and other local, historical and educational attractions.

They are full-color, spiral bound trail guides. Each highlights over 100 sites along each region of the North Carolina Birding Trail. They include maps, detailed site descriptions and color photos throughout. Each site description includes directions, access information, focal species and habitat listings, and on-site visitor amenities. "While You're In The Area" listings at the end of each grouping offer additional visitor opportunities in the local area.

Each guide costs \$18.95 in softcover at bookstores.

The University of North Carolina Press

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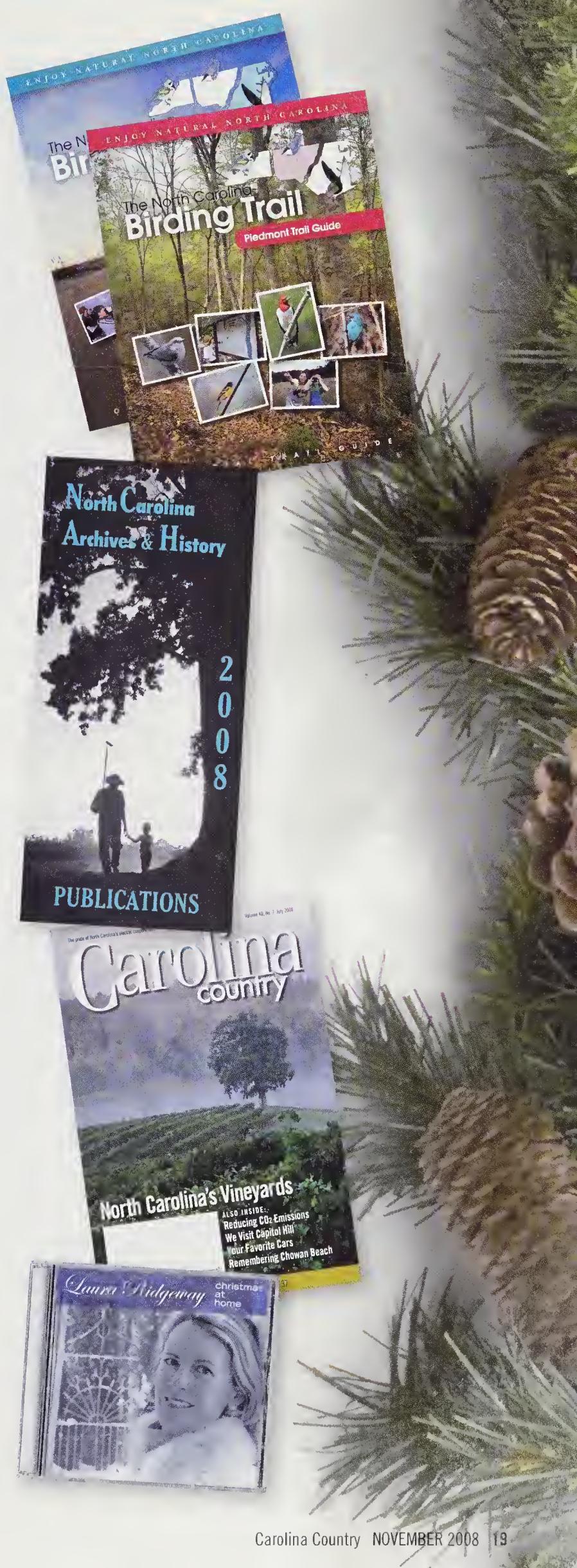
P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611

www.carolinacountry.com

"Christmas at Home" CD

Longtime vocalist and Raleigh native Laura Ridgeway brings to life holiday favorites on her CD "Christmas at Home." Her smooth, versatile voice and the musicians who accompany her combine jazz, oldies pop, swing, and blues, along with original pieces, to offer classy, nostalgic songs. The CD's 12 tracks includes "Let It Snow, Let It Snow, Let It Snow," "What Child Is This," "Have Yourself A Merry Little Christmas" and the artist's own "Christmas Lullaby." It closes with "Jingle Bell Rock Medley" (lightly sizzling versions of "Santa Baby" and "Rocking Around The Christmas Tree"). Ridgeway's vocal influences include jazz legends Carmen McRae and Nat King Cole; pop artists Karen Carpenter, Frank Sinatra and k.d.lang; and country artists Patsy Cline and Mary Chapin Carpenter. "Laura Ridgeway and Friends" frequently perform in the Triangle. The name can refer to a duo (vocals with keyboards or guitar) all the way to Ridgeway singing with a five or six-piece seasoned group of musicians, as illustrated here on "Laura Ridgeway: Christmas at Home." The CD sells for \$14.99.

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Measuring your carbon footprint

Many of us are looking to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases our activities produce. By assessing how much pollution each of your individual actions generates—be it setting your thermostat, shopping for groceries, commuting to work or flying somewhere for vacation—you can begin to see how changing a few habits here and there can significantly reduce your overall carbon footprint. There are a number of free online carbon footprint calculators to help.

The University of California at Berkeley's Cool Climate Calculator is a free Web-based tool that takes into account daily driving mileage and grocery and electricity expenses, among other factors, to assign a carbon score, which users can compare to similar households.

EarthLab.com is an online community of users who take a 3-minute survey and get back a carbon footprint score. The site provides some 150 lifestyle change suggestions that will cut carbon emissions—from hanging your clothes to dry to sending postcards instead of letters to taking the bike instead of the car.

Other Web sites, green groups and corporations, including CarbonFootprint.com, CarbonCounter.org, Conservation International, The Nature Conservancy and British Oil Giant BP, among others, also offer carbon calculators. And CarbonFund.org even allows you to assess your carbon footprint—and then offers you the ability to offset such emissions by investing in clean energy initiatives.

To learn more: Cool Climate Calculator, www.berkeley.edu/calculator.html; EarthLab, www.earthlab.com; CarbonFootprint.com, www.carbonfootprint.com; CarbonCounter.org, www.carboncounter.org; BP, www.bp.com; Conservation International, www.conservation.org; The Nature Conservancy, www.nature.org.

Natural headache remedies

Many of us use over-the-counter painkillers to treat the occasional headache. Ibuprofen (Advil, Motrin) can increase the risk of heart and circulation problems—including heart attack and stroke—and is also tough on the digestive tract. Too much acetaminophen (Tylenol) has been linked to nausea, diarrhea, and kidney and liver problems. Many natural health care practitioners disparage drugs for merely masking the symptoms of larger problems.

All headaches are not the same and gobbling down pain pills will not address the causes, whatever they may be. Some headaches are caused by tension; others stem from sinus congestion, caffeine withdrawal, constipation, food allergies, spinal misalignment or lack of sleep. And then there are migraines, which researchers think are neurological in nature: The brain fails to constrict the nerve pathways that open the arteries to the brain, resulting in a pounding headache as blood flows in unchecked.

To make tension headaches go away, the Farmers' Almanac recommends applying an ice pack to the neck and upper back, or, even better, getting someone to massage those areas. Also, soaking the feet in hot water can divert blood from your head to your feet.



Getty Images

Massage and techniques such as acupressure can help relieve tension headaches without the need for chemical painkillers. As to relieving migraine headaches, a number of nutritional supplements and herbs have good track records, but they should not be used without the guidance of a trusted doctor or naturopath.

Acupressure (like acupuncture, but without the needles) promotes healing throughout the body by stimulating channels of energy known as meridians. Victoria Abreo, alternative medicine editor for the Web site BellaOnline, says that anyone suffering from a tension headache can employ a simple acupressure technique to help relieve the pain: "With one hand, press the shallow indentation in the back of the head at the base of the skull. Simultaneously, with the thumb and forefinger of the other hand, press firmly into the upper hollows of the eye sockets, right where they straddle the bridge of the nose and meet the 't' of the eyebrow bridge." She says to press softly at first, and then more firmly, holding for three to five minutes.

As for migraines, avoiding certain trigger foods might be key to staving them off: dairy products, processed meat, red wine, caffeine and chocolate. New research has shown that some people with specific dietary deficiencies are more prone to migraines. Some recent clinical trials have shown three nutritional supplements—magnesium, riboflavin and coenzyme Q10—to be particularly effective at reducing the frequency and severity of migraines. Also, a number of herbs—including feverfew, butterbur, lavender, ginkgo biloba, rosemary and chamomile—have proven track records in preventing or stopping migraines. **Ⓢ**

To learn more: Farmers' Almanac, www.farmersalmanac.com; BellaOnline, www.bellaonline.com; Mother Earth News, www.motherearthnews.com.

Got an Environmental Question?

Send it to: EarthTalk, c/o E/The Environmental Magazine, P.O. Box 5098, Westport, CT 06881; submit it at: www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/thisweek, or e-mail: earthtalk@emagazine.com. Read past columns at: www.emagazine.com/earthtalk/archives.php.

Where Can You Save Energy?

The hotter your attic gets, the harder it is to cool the area below.

Caulk and seal leaky windows.

If attic floor joists are visible you need more insulation.

Insulation should not block soffit vents.

Reduce draft with gasket behind outlet cover.

Have a professional find all your air leaks with a blower door test.

Turn off lights, TV, etc. when not in use.

Change system filters monthly.

Weatherstrip exterior doors. Insulated or solid doors are best.

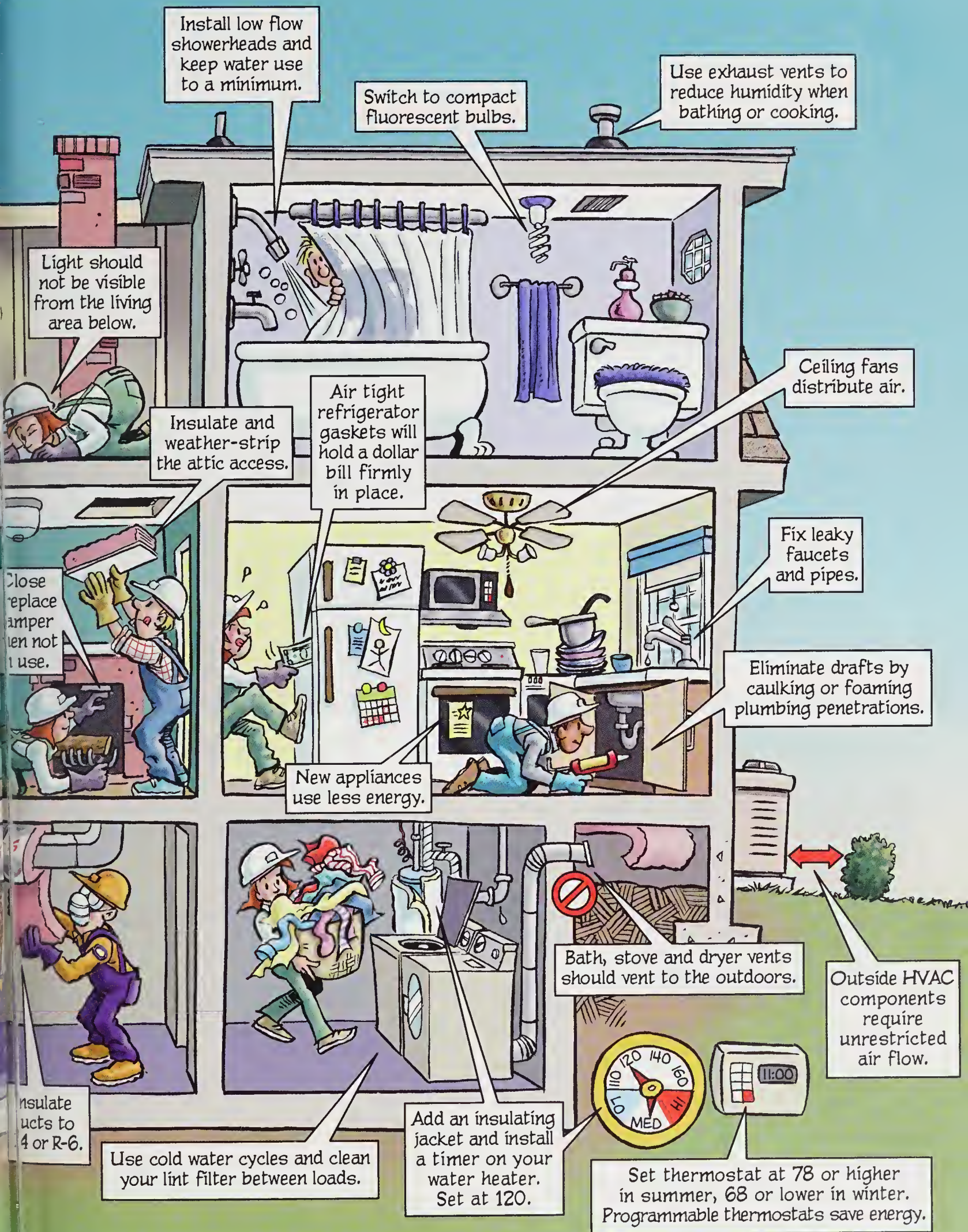
Don't block HVAC registers or returns.

Cover exposed ground with a vapor barrier.

Inspect ductwork for leaks. Seal with a mastic paste.

Have your HVAC system routinely checked by a qualified technician.

Your Touchstone Energy cooperative can help you determine how to use energy at home most efficiently. For information about specific projects, products and services, contact your Touchstone Energy cooperative.



Install low flow showerheads and keep water use to a minimum.

Switch to compact fluorescent bulbs.

Use exhaust vents to reduce humidity when bathing or cooking.

Light should not be visible from the living area below.

Insulate and weather-strip the attic access.

Air tight refrigerator gaskets will hold a dollar bill firmly in place.

Ceiling fans distribute air.

Fix leaky faucets and pipes.

Eliminate drafts by caulking or foaming plumbing penetrations.

New appliances use less energy.

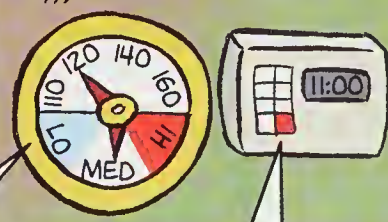
Bath, stove and dryer vents should vent to the outdoors.

Outside HVAC components require unrestricted air flow.

Insulate ducts to R-4 or R-6.

Use cold water cycles and clean your lint filter between loads.

Add an insulating jacket and install a timer on your water heater. Set at 120.



Set thermostat at 78 or higher in summer, 68 or lower in winter. Programmable thermostats save energy.

Illustration by Jackie Pittman



Ledbetter Mill

Richmond County, N.C.

By Kay Fetner | Photography by Ashley Fetner


In January 1881, Thomas Benson Ledbetter purchased 100 acres at a public auction and with his nephew, John Steel Ledbetter, as a partner, built South Union Mills on Hitchcock Creek in Rockingham, Richmond County. It was in operation until 1894 when the mill burned due to a lightning strike. They rebuilt the mill and changed the name to Ledbetter Manufacturing Company. The company manufactured cotton yarn, operating completely on water power, until World War II. Then a diesel generator was used to supplement the water power until 1950 when the mill was converted to electrical power. A manufacturing journal reported in 1962 that the mill produced 2,555,000 pounds of yarn.

Through the years many of the mill workers were third and fourth generation employees. Some worked past their 80s, which indicates the respect the workers held for the Ledbetter family and their business associates who managed the mill.

In 1979 the mill was sold to Glen Raven Mills, which operated until 1990 when Parsons Formal Chair Manufacturing purchased the property.

When Parsons Manufacturing relocated, W.T. "Pete" Ussery purchased the property. A veteran of 35 years in the construction business, Pete took this historic landmark with its huge exposed beams, columns, large windows and 20-inch exterior walls of handmade brick and renovated it into today's upscale Carolyn's Mill Condominiums.

The Ledbetter family settled in this area in the early 1700s. The preservation of this mill will stand as a reminder of their involvement, service and contributions to their community.

Ashley Fetner, a member of Randolph EMC who lives in Asheboro, captured this image early one morning on the way to visit his dad in Hamlet, Anson County. Copies are available through afetnerportraits@triad.rr.com 

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The lamp that wouldn't cut off, the furry spy in the closet, and

Other Tales Of Technical Wizardry

King of the remotes

My husband ran over 14 miles of wire in our new home for his home automation project. Using a laptop or cell phone, he will be able to control and monitor everything: lights, doors, alarms, motion detectors, video, TV, satellite.

My friends all think he is crazy for the effort that this project has required, crawling through rafters, pulling multiple types of cables, drilling countless holes.

I know that we will have an amazingly sophisticated, smart home. I just hope that I can figure out how to turn on the lights.

Chris Paszko, West End, Randolph EMC

Lightning in the yard

Soon after purchasing a new SLR digital camera, I had gotten my fill of flower and puppy dog pictures. I decided to try the delayed shutter feature on the camera and came up with the idea of having my wife, Amanda, walk across the yard with a flashlight. To my surprise we came up with this photo.



We decided to tell her parents and a few folks at church that I had gotten a picture of lightning running into the house. Most people were in awe that I had such "good timing."

Rob McComas, Mill Spring, Rutherford EMC

Helloooo!

During the month of August, my father was experiencing trouble with his home telephone. The telephone would ring but you could not receive or make calls. You could only hear the phone ring.



Well, my father has an "antique" telephone that dates back to the early 1900s. (He's a collector.) A friend who is also a telephone repairman had installed modern basic wiring so this phone could be "plugged" into today's phone jack. But no one had ever used it. Until this particular day...

It worked!

We plugged this phone (circa 1915) into the home phone jack. Using his cell phone, my father called his home phone number. Immediately, we heard a "ticking" sound. This antique phone was trying to ring. Of course, these phones did not have bells built in them, but it was ticking, as it would have over 90 years ago! The audio was very clear. We then called his cell phone with this antique.

Who says that you can never go back? Well, you can. We replaced his house phone.

Joey Sellers, Hamlet, Pee Dee EMC

The flash at night

One evening we had gone to bed to watch TV. My husband, Gary, had already gone to sleep. I turned the TV off and was almost asleep when I heard an "electrical buzz." My eyes were closed, but I was sure there had been a flash of light.

Later I thought to tell Gary about this, thinking maybe the automatic timer on the TV was malfunctioning. We didn't think much of it until a few nights later when it happened again. Once again, I was the only one awake. I unplugged the TV, concerned that it could have a short.

A few nights later (TV still unplugged), I see this flash of light again. I am a little unnerved at this point, having seen too many sci-fi movies, alien abductions and such. The next day, we removed the TV from the bedroom.

The next time the flash happened, I was certain that the power was arcing from the electrical outlets, but there were no scorching marks on the wall.

After witnessing this light show for several nights, I had had enough. It was time to involve Union Power. They came when I wasn't home but left me a message that everything checked out. I was relieved but still puzzled. Night came, and there was the same light show again!

A friend told us to turn the power off in that end of the house until he could come check things out. That night I went to bed feeling a little better, because there was no power in that end of the house. Gary was watching

TV in another room. I was almost asleep when I heard the sound and the flash again! Now I was convinced that I was going to be the next alien abductee and started yelling for Gary. He came and laid across the bed waiting for something to happen. He had always been asleep when it happened before.

When Gary finally went off to bed, he kicked something under the bed, and the flash went off in his face. It was his deer camera.

What was happening was that when the air conditioning went on, it would blow the bed skirt and activate his deer camera which he'd stored under the bed.

To all you hunters: Take the batteries out of your deer cameras before you store them.

Gary and Diana Johnson
Concord, Union Power

Furby gets scared

For those who don't remember, Furby was popular in the late 1990s. Furby is a little furry animal-robot toy with big eyes. Around then, my young daughter had one, but after a few years, it was thrown in the back of the closet and forgotten.



A year or so goes by, when one night around 3 a.m. I hear a voice calling. Thinking it was one of my three kids, I get up to investigate. I follow the voice to my daughter's closet and Furby is in there calling for help. "It's dark in here. I'm scared."

I rummaged through the closet until I found him. It worried me so bad, I even went to the trouble to find a screwdriver to remove the batteries. I never heard Furby speak any English before, so I was having flash-backs

from some of those bad teen horror movies where the toys come alive and kill the family.

Well, it seems new Furbies start out speaking Furbish but are programmed to speak less Furbish and more English as they get older. My understanding is they go on auto-pilot after a while and are independent of their owners. They even have a computer chip that can record voices. (I guess to add to their vocabulary!) They were even prohibited from being in homes of employees of the National Security Agency, because they could be used to spy on the U.S.! (Washington Post, January 13, 1999, "Furby a Threat to National Security?")

My husband eventually took Furby on to school to entertain his high school students. Now am protected at home by my electronic robo-dog who will, according to the instructions, guard the house and bark when he hears any loud noise.

Connie Puckett, Midland,
Union Power Cooperative


Mystery lamps

We purchased the tall slender lamp with the burgundy shade for our bedroom. When I had surgery and needed easy access to light during the night, we put a "touch" lamp switch apparatus on it. Now it comes on at will. It comes on in the middle of the night as well as




during the day. It comes on even if you touch the night table it sits on. This happens every day and night, and it is a mystery to us, but we do not know how to repair it.

The ginger jar lamp with the dark green shade in our den also comes on by itself, but not as often as the one in our bedroom does. If we leave the house, lock the door and the dead bolt, and put the alarm system on, this jar light is on when we come home. We don't know what causes this either.

Everything else electronic in our six-year-old home works. We would welcome any suggestions for overcoming this problem. 

Jean Sosebee, Bessemer City,
Rutherford EMC

Thanks to everyone who sent us tales of technical wizardry. You can see more on our Web site. Next month we'll publish some of your favorite holiday recipes {Deadline was Oct. 15}.



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The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.

2. One entry per household per month.

3. Photos are welcome. Digital photos should be a minimum of 1200 by 800 pixels.

4. E-mailed or typed, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.

5. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.

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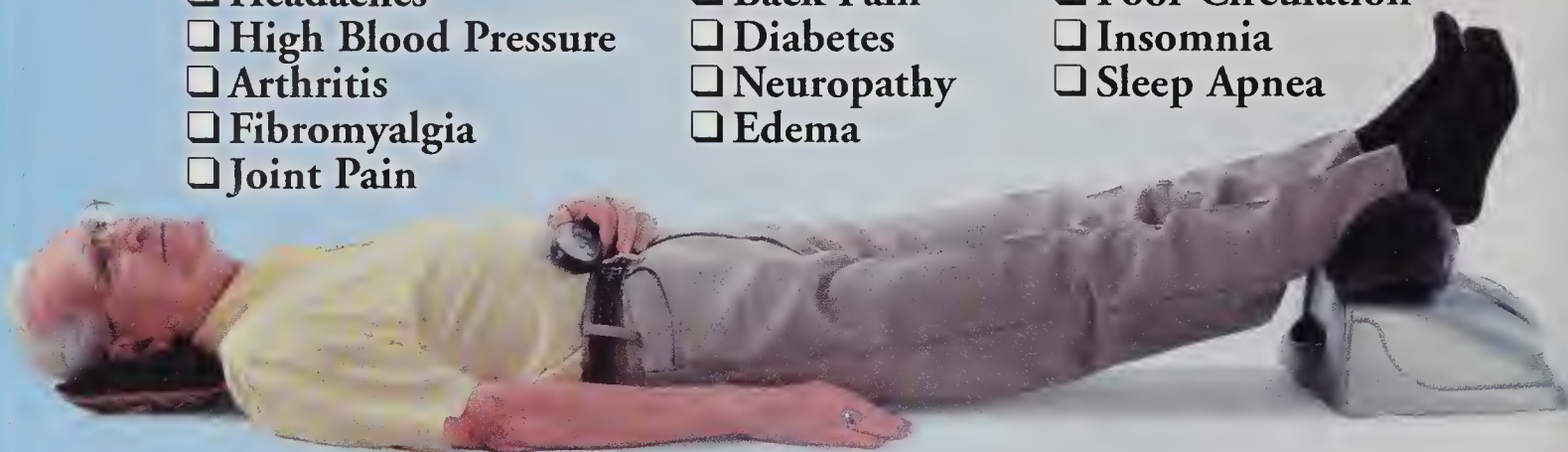
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- ☐ Sleep Apnea



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What people are saying about the Exerciser 2000 Elite™

After using the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ twice a day for one week the swelling in my ankles went away. It has also helped my breathing, as I can get out and walk without having to stop and catch my breath! Thank you. —Shirley H., Florida

As a Chiropractor, I would like to say that the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ enables people to benefit themselves at home. It is a valuable asset in moving lymph fluid, oxygenating the blood, increasing immune system function, maintaining mobility in the spine, and additionally freeing up a spine that has become stiff and arthritic. —Garry Gorsuch, D.C.

The ad I saw almost sounded "too good to be true". With your no risk money back guarantee I figured I had nothing to lose so I purchased the machine...and boy, am I glad I did! I am 75 years old and suffer from sciatica, which makes my back and legs tighten up and causes numbness. After using the machine for only 4 minutes, I noticed my lower back loosening up. Since I have been using the machine I have been almost pain free. My sciatica is not giving me problems anymore and my body stays loosened up. I have also had a snoring problem for quite some time, however, since using the machine my snoring has subsided. My wife is so excited! I cannot tell you how much this machine has turned my life around. —C. Cummings

After having a stroke, I could no longer exercise the way I used to. As a result, I developed edema. A friend of mine introduced me to the Exerciser 2000 Elite™. I loved it and I purchased one for myself. After using the machine daily for a few weeks, my symptoms of edema were completely gone. I now use the machine twice a day for 16 minutes each time on speed 3. What a wonderful way to exercise. —Robert M.

I love using the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ after my morning workout. It is an excellent way to cool down and it helps to start my day off right. —Deanna C., Kansas

I have had constipation problems for over 25 years. Since I have been using the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ I have been regular every day and have begun to lose weight. This is truly a blessing and is so easy to use. —Jeannie

I am in my late 80's and have diabetes. The first thing I noticed when I started using my machine was that my feet were warm when I went to bed. They were always ice cold before. Because one of my problems is poor circulation, I use the machine three times a day for 10 minutes each; in the morning, late afternoon and just before bed. I almost forgot to mention that I have not been able to lift my arms above my head. Now I can do it. You think that's no big deal until you can't do it anymore. —Ralph K.

My husband and I have been into natural products all of our lives but nothing has ever affected us like the Exerciser 2000 Elite™. My husband is 72 and delivers flowers. He carries 5 gallon buckets of water. Since using the machine, his back hasn't hurt him at all. My hips would hurt if I stood too long and I would get weak and have to sit down. Now I can walk and sit as long as I want. I don't take pain medication anymore. In the morning, when I get out of bed I'm not stiff anymore. At 65, wow, this is great! Thank you for offering such a great machine. We are going to tell everyone we know about it. —Cheryl J.

I had suffered with sleep apnea for many years. I was told I would have to use a breathing apparatus. In the meantime, I was introduced to the Exerciser 2000 Elite™ and decided to purchase one. Within two weeks, I was sleeping more deeply and restfully than ever before. —David B.

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on the back porch
where he watched TV.

From Nicole Wooten



From Nicole Wooten

- ... You went to a settin' up that was in the front room of the deceased's house.
- ... You store unused furniture in the barn out back.
- ... You know everybody at the local grocery store on Saturday morning.
- ... Your mama jokingly says dinner will be "air custards and wind pies."
- ... All your aunts and uncles have middle names that you use every time you address them.
- ... You're familiar with the word "to-be-sure."
- ... Any soda is a "drank."
- ... Your family reunion was held at the church fellowship hall.

From Brenda Palmer, Monroe

- ... The day you killed hogs, you cut the fat into small pieces and put it in the cast iron wash pot to boil. This is called "rendering" lard that you could use all the next year for frying.
- ... You made lye soap in the same wash pot, using Red Devil lye and old cooking grease. This soap was good enough to cut tobacco tar off your hands and feet.
- ... The children had to clean the chittlins when they got home from school on hog killing day. Then you made your own sausage and stuffed it into the chittlins.
- ... You wanted to do homework instead of chores.

From Elizabeth Dyke, Vale

- ... You played jackstone.
- ... You made a grasshopper house out of weeds

From Phyllis Grant, Statesville

- ... You heated water in a wash pot to use in a gas-powered washing machine.
- ... Your mother put bluing in the rinse water to make the white clothes whiter.
- ... You stomped molly pops to hear the loud noise.
- ... To float in the creek, you used 2 ½-gallon oil cans with lids.
- ... Your mother rolled your hair with strips from a brown paper bag.
- ... At Christmas your home had a 4-foot tree with one strand of lights. And your daddy put foil from a cigarette pack around a bulb that was not burning on that strand of lights to make them all burn.
- ... Before going to school in winter, your brother checked his rabbit traps or "gums."
- ... You drew water from a well with a windlass.
- ... Your family had a square sign with the numbers 25, 50, 75, and 100 hanging on it. Whichever number you put at the top indicated how much ice you wanted the ice man to leave.
- ... Your mother saved green and gold stamps for prizes.

From Douglas Mozingo, Stantonsburg

- ... You would sit in the living room in the winter with the doors and windows shut and still feel a cool breeze coming through the cracks in the walls.
- ... Your ma made cush for breakfast.
- ... You were afraid to go out after dark because the "kitty mouse" might get you.
- ... You bush-hogged your ditch banks in the winter with a swub blade.
- ... Your pa made you a swing in the old oak tree made from a truck tire and old plow lines.
- ... You were scared to death if your ma or pa said they would skin you alive if you did something wrong.

From Sandy Divers, Hertford

- ... The town trash collection man brought his horse and two-wheeled cart into your back yard to collect the trash from each trash can.
- ... You ran down the middle of the street on hot summer days behind the slow-moving ice truck so you could grab a few small pieces of ice out of the back to suck on.
- ... A farmer drove slowly down the streets of your small town, calling out "Watermelons"! And you ran home and begged your Mom for 10 cents so you could buy a watermelon.

From Kay Walker, Cherryville

- ... Summer vacation was planned around revival meeting and Vacation Bible School.
- ... Saturday night traditions were the fish camp and "Hee Haw."
- ... You've eaten from a watermelon that was burst open in the garden.
- ... Mockingbirds woke you up at 2 a.m.
- ... You made mud pies and put them in the driveway so that your daddy could run over them when he came home from work

From Alice C. Alexander, Davidson

- ... You collected chicken feed sacks until you had enough to make a dress.
- ... You sprinkled your clothes and ironed with a gas iron because you had no electricity.
- ... You played on a grapevine swing in the woods and ate hickory nuts.
- ... You made ice cream in a lard bucket with chipped ice in a water bucket.

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- F. Smalley — "A company that advertises the truth saved 50% compared to my gas heat. I found it hard to believe until my power bill came. Thanks a million!"
- R. Cope — "You provide great heaters and a warranty that you stand behind — I was heating by propane gas — switched to Hydro-Sil, cut my heating bills in half. You proved that you cannot go wrong with Hydro-Sil."

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5' 1250 w	130-180 sf	\$259	\$25	
4' 1000 w	100-130 sf	\$239	\$18	
3' 750 w	75-100 sf	\$189	\$18	
2' 500 w	50-75 sf	\$169	\$18	

Thermostats — Call for options & exact heater needed.

110 VOLT PORTABLES (Thermostat included.)	Discount Price	S&H	Qty.
5' Hydro-Max 750-1500 w	\$229	\$25	
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Heavy-Duty 240v	\$329	\$25	

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100x150x16.....\$65,950

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60X75X12.....\$ 15,672
50X100X12.....\$ 16,920
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ELECTRIC

		E	T	L	
		T	R		
		R	E	T	
	T	L	C		
		I	L		R
	L	C	I		

Fill this grid so that each row, each column and each 2 x 3 rectangle contains all six different letters of the word ELECTRIC.
ELCTRI

SOUTHERN exposure

Look Before You Leap

Hired to jump into UNC's Kenan Memorial football stadium in Chapel Hill just before kickoff, two skydivers parachuted instead into Duke's Wallace Wade stadium in Durham. They slunk off the field in shame when they realized their mistake.

No offside penalty was called.

LIGHT VERSE

Even Numbers

That every number has its even double is a fact that's obvious to any clod. So I've come to the conclusion, though it adds to my confusion: There are twice as many even ones as odd.

—cgj

STEP OUTSIDE!

The object of this puzzle is to count your way out of the maze. Start at #3 in the center and move three squares, up, down, right, left or diagonally. The number you land on tells you how many more squares you can move in any of eight directions. Example: If you were to move S, NW, E, you would be back where you started. With luck, you will eventually land outside by just one step. There may be more than one way out. My answer, in twelve steps, will be published next month. Send me yours with your comments.
E-mail: joyner@carolinacountry.com

							N									
					2	4	8	2	4	4	2					
				7	5	5	3	4	3	5	7	3				
		4	4	6	1	4	7	2	1	6	5	7	6	4		
W	3	5	1	1	3	8	2	3	5	5	1	5	2	5	3	E
		4	6	7	2	4	1	2	1	4	6	8	6	4		
				8	5	1	3	3	1	5	3	7				
					5	4	2	3	2	4	2					
								S								

Say Watt?

Letters mysteriously fell out of last month's "Say Watt?" puzzle. We apologize. The correct version can be found online at www.carolinacountry.com/Joyner/Joyner10.08.pdf

For answers, please see page 34

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TIMBERLINE 1/2 LOG CABINS

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20 X 30.....	\$21,900
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I	R	C	T	L	E
L	L	E	R	I	C
E	I	R	L	C	T
C	L	L	E	R	I

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November Events



The Carolina Renaissance Festival runs weekends, through November 16, in Huntersville (near Charlotte). The festival goes on, rain or shine, and hours are 10 a.m.–5:30 p.m. Get discounted tickets in advance at Harris Teeter stores—\$17 for adults, \$6 for children ages 5–12, ages 5 and under are free. To learn more, call (704) 896-5544 or visit www.royalfaires.com

ONGOING

Tweetsie Ghost Train

Through Nov. 1, Blowing Rock
(800) 526-5740

A Sense of Place

Materials used in contemporary installation art
Through Nov. 2, Fayetteville
(910) 485-5121
www.fayettevillemuseumart.org

Renaissance Festival

Through Nov. 16, Huntersville
(704) 896-5544
www.renfestinfo.com

"Star Over Bethlehem"

Emmerich Theatre
Nov. 8 through Dec. 20, Edenton
(252) 482-3400
www.visitedenton.com

"Printers and Photographers"

Permanent exhibit, Winston-Salem
(336) 721-7350
www.oldsalem.org www.oldsalem.org

Aw Shucks! Corn Maze and Pumpkin Patch

Through Nov. 23, Monroe
(704) 221-0350
www.awshuckscornmaze.com

Dead Sea Scrolls

NC Museum of Natural Sciences
Through Dec. 28, Raleigh
(919) 733-7450
www.visitraleigh.com

Our Story

Artifacts from the Albemarle Region
Through December, Elizabeth City
(252) 335-1453
www.museumofthealbemarle.com

A Dickens of a Christmas

Nov. 28 through Dec. 24, New Bern
(252) 637-3111
www.newbernchamber.com

"Seeing the City: Sloan's New York"

Through Jan. 4, Winston-Salem
(336) 758-5580
www.reynoldahouse.org

"Mountain Roots"

Culture and landscapes art
Nov. 22 through mid-Jan., Bryson City
(828) 293-2239
www.spiritofappalachia.org

Festival of Lights

Nov. 28 through Jan. 4, Blowing Rock
(828) 295-5525
www.chetola.com

Christmas Decorations Korner's Folly House

Nov. 29 through Jan. 4, Kernersville
(336) 966-7922
www.kornersfolly.org

1

Bluegrass & Gospel Show

Monroe
(704) 283-0215
www.deepershadeofblue.com

Costume Parade & Games

Love Valley
(704) 592-2570
www.lovevalley.com

Bluegrass & Dinner

Heritage-Camping & Recreation site
Carthage
(910) 783-8810

Korean War Veterans Benefit

Elvis, Roy Orbison, Blues Brothers tribute artists
Mint Hill
(704) 545-6618

Ghost Walk

Walk through cemetery and hear about World War I
Faison
(910) 267-9978
www.fignc.org

Hog Happnin' BBQ

Championship Cook-Off
Shelby
(704) 477-6894
www.hoghappnin.com

Opry Theater

Country, gospel and bluegrass show
New Bern
(252) 636-6225

A Haunted Evening

Hertford
(252) 426-7567
www.newboldwhitehouse.org

Holiday Shopping Spree

Smithfield
(919) 320-7946

"Junie B. Jones" Musical

Smithfield
(919) 209-2099

Blues Brothers Revival/Palladian Series

Clayton
(919) 553-1737

Blacksmith Auction

Brasstown
(828) 837-2775
www.folkschool.org

Foothills Highland Games

Hendersonville
(828) 693-8526
www.scotsfoothillshg.org

"Sylvia"

Sassy romantic comedy
Nov. 1–2, Shelby
(704) 480-8495
www.gsct.org

2

Buckhorn Community Gathering

Hosted by author AlexSandra Lett
Sanford
(919) 258-9299

6

Rani Arbo & Daisy Mayhem

Americana roots music
Oriental
(252) 249-3670
www.pamlicomusic.org

Holly Day Fair

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Fayetteville
(910) 483-5509

Creation Festival

Christian music
Fayetteville
(910) 438-4117
www.atthecrown.com

Ballet Flamenco Jose Porcel
Pembroke
(910) 521-6409
www.uncp.edu/gpac

7

Cozy Cottage Craft Show
Nov. 7-8, Kernersville
(336) 993-2260

The Down East Holiday Show
Shopping extravaganza
Nov. 7-9, Greenville
(252) 493-7496
www.pittcc.edu

Gallery Hop
Winston-Salem
(336) 727-7282
www.dadaws.org

AMJ Christmas Show
Nov. 7-8, 13-15, 20-22, 28-29,
Selma
(919) 202-9927

Christmas Open House
Wilmington
(910) 686-9518
www.poplargrove.com

"Big River"
Twain's timeless classic
Nov. 7-9, 13-16, 21-23, New Bern
(252) 633-0567
www.newberncivictheatre.org

8

Lake Mattamuskeet Bike Ride
Swan Quarter
(252) 926-9171 or (888) 493-3826
www.hydecountrychamber.org

Fellowship Fall Bazaar
Bridgeton
(252) 638-4638

Discover Anson Bike Ride
Ansonville
(704) 694-4181
www.discoveranson.com

**Elton John Tribute
Artist Carl Rosen**
Matthews
(704) 545-6618

**Collard Festival &
Veteran's Day Celebration**
Maxton
(910) 844-5231

Jazz by Candlelight
Trumpeter Joey Sommerville
Elizabeth City
(252) 331-2925
<http://rivercitycdc.org>

Sheep Dog Trials
Nov. 8-9, Huntersville
(704) 875-3113
www.ruralhill.net

Women's Bazaar Day
Hertford
(252) 426-7568

Gold Rush
Huntersville
(704) 875-2312
www.lattaplantation.org

Fall Festival
Shelby
(704) 480-8495
www.gsct.org

Pottery Festival
Shelby
(704) 824-9928
www.carolinapotteryfestival.org

Veterans Day Parade
Fayetteville
(910) 483-5311

Stayin' Alive
Bee Gees Tribute
Morganton
(828) 438-5294

9

Dakkota Concert
NC-based country music band
Manteo
(252) 475-1500

13

Moravian Christmas Crafts
Winston-Salem
(336) 721-7350
www.oldsalem.org

The Southern Fried Chicks
Nov. 13, 15, Spindale
Female version of
Blue Collar Comedy Tour
(828) 245-1492
www.foundationshows.org

14

Artwalk
New Bern
(252) 633-4369
www.carolinacreations.com

Holly Jolly Craft Show
Nov. 14-15, Winston-Salem
336-659-4305
www.cricketsnest.com

**East Coast Gospel
Music Convention**
Nov. 14-15, Smithfield
(919) 209-2099

15

Festival of Trees
Open house, gala & silent auction
New Bern
(252) 633-8247
www.ncfestivaloftrees.com

Ribbon Walk for Cancer
Fayetteville
(910) 483-5311

"Save Our Wartime History"
Memorabilia, film
Nov. 15-16, Monroe
(704) 283-8184
www.union.lib.nc.us

Piedmont Craftsmen's Fair
Nov. 15-16, Winston-Salem
(336) 725-1516
www.piedmontcraftsmen.org

17

Lazy O Farm Turkey Dayz
Nov. 17-26, Smithfield
(919) 9334-1132

19

Christmas Candlelight Tour
Nov. 19-20 & 28-29,
Winston-Salem
(336) 721-7300
www.oldsalem.org

20

"The Imaginary Invalid"
Bawdy satire
Nov. 20-25, Greenville
(252) 328-6829
www.ecu.edu/theatredance

21

Meadow Lights
Big Christmas show
Meadow
(919) 894-4370

22

**Roy Orbison
Tribute Artist Tony King**
Matthews
(704) 545-6618

Horse Show Series
Smithfield
(919) 934-1344

Seagrove Pottery Festival
Nov. 22-23, Seagrove
(336) 381-4921
www.celebrationofseagrovepotters.com

Capenter's Ball
Habitat for Humanity benefit
Forest City
(828) 245-1492

**Fiddlers &
Bluegrass Convention**
Ellenboro
(828) 245-1492

23

Christmas Open House
Lexington
(336) 249-0383
www.uptownlexington.com

25

Lipizzaner Stallions Show
Nov. 25-26, Williamston
(407) 366-0366
www.lipizzaner.com

"It's A Wonderful Life"
Live radio play
Spindale
(828) 245-1492
www.foundationshows.org

26

"Annie"
Musical comedy
Morganton
(828) 439-5294

27

Christmas Tree Lighting
Forest City
(828) 245-1492
www.forestcityevents.com

28

**Santa's House
& Winter Carnival**
Shelby
(704) 484-6293

Holiday Carriage Rides
Shelby
(704) 484-3100
www.uptownshelby.org

Lights on the Neuse
Clayton
(919) 553-0016

A Dickens Holiday
Fayetteville
(910) 483-5311
www.theartscouncil.com

Christmas Open House
Nov. 28-29, New Bern
(252) 633-4369
www.carolinacreations.com

A Plantation Christmas
Nov. 28-29, Huntersville
(704) 875-2312
www.lattaplantation.org

Antiques Extravaganza
Nov. 28-30, Winston-Salem
(336) 924-8337

**Craftsmen's Christmas Arts
& Crafts Fest**
Nov. 28-30, Greensboro
(336) 282-5550
www.craftshow.com

Christmas Eve with Steve

Family comedy by Molly Bass

Nov. 28–Dec. 14, Hickory

(828) 327-3855

www.hct.org**"A Christmas Carol"**

Nov. 28–Dec. 14, Fayetteville

(910) 483-5311

www.gilberttheater.com

29

Whelen All-American Series NASCAR racing

Kenly

(919) 284-1114

Pottery Open House

Homethrown Pottery

Nov. 29–30, Trinity

(336) 476-8452

www.homethrownpottery.com

30

Christmas Parade

Forest City

(828) 245-1492

www.forestcityevents.com**Christmas Parade**

Scotland Neck

(252) 826-3152

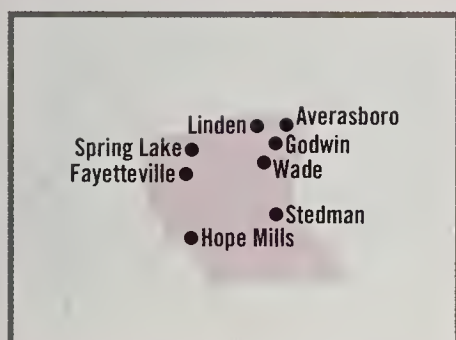
www.townofscotlandneck.com**Listing Information****Deadlines:**

For Jan.: Nov. 24

For Feb.: Dec. 24

**Submit Listings Online:**

Visit www.carolinacountry.com and click "See NC" to add your event to the magazine and/or our Web site. Or e-mail events@carolinacountry.com

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& South River EMC territories



Fayetteville offers the largest indoor climbing wall in North Carolina.

In the 1720s, European settlers known as the Highland Scots found the Upper Cape Fear Valley hospitable. The Scots settled and formed a town in 1730 on the Cape Fear River known as Campbellton and the area became a major river transportation link between other settlements. Originally part of Bladen County, Cumberland County came into its own in 1754. Campbellton was renamed Fayetteville, after French General Marquis De La Fayette in 1783. Fayetteville later lost being named North Carolina's state capitol by one vote, but serves as the county seat.

Fayetteville has become the sixth largest city in the state with a growing permanent population of more than 150,000. The greater Fayetteville area boasts 315,000 residents, including the military personnel at Fort Bragg and Pope Air Force Base. Just off I-95, the city is halfway between New York and Florida.

Visitors to Fayetteville have plenty to see. Military museums, such as the Airborne & Special Operations Museum and the 82nd Airborne Division War Memorial Museum, as well as cultural sites such as the Museum of the Cape Fear, Museum of Art and the Crown Coliseum venue for indoor sports and entertainment. And just off the interstate is Jambbas Ranch, a small zoo featured in the 2007 Carolina Country Travel Guide.

Cumberland County boasts many small towns that are worth visiting outside of Fayetteville: Falcon, Godwin, Hope Mills, Linden, Spring Lake, Stedman and Wade all boast a small town charm with cultural and historic significance. The Civil War battlefield in Averaasboro can also be found in the county.

Three top spots:

Gillis Hill Farms: This eighth-generation working farm welcomes visitors to see how a working farm survives since the 1700s. The Gillis farm produces tobacco, soybeans, corn, hay and trees. Visitors learn how the farm works today. Self-guided tours, horse- and tractor-drawn wagon tours are available. Visitors are also treated to homemade ice cream. (910) 867-2350 or www.gillishillfarm.com.

The Climbing Place: The largest indoor climbing wall in North Carolina. Opened to the public since 1995, this 18,000-square-foot facility offers more than 40,000 climbing holds, 60 top ropes, a massive overhang area and a 300-foot gym traverse, along with plenty of bouldering surface and a boulder. The facility welcomes first-time climbers as well as experienced. (910) 486-9638 or <http://theclimbingplace.com>.

Driving Trails: Cumberland County's rich history dates back to before the Revolutionary War. The convention and visitors bureau developed 10 driving trails to accommodate all tastes: cultural, historic and recreational. Learn about the county's African American history, military, war years, regional religion, architecture, transportation, gardens and art. Each trail is customizable with audio files at www.visitfayettevillenc.com/culturalheritagetrails or call the Fayetteville CVB at (888) 888-98-HEROES or (910) 255-8217.

Learn of other nearby adventures and events:

(800) 255-8217

www.visitfayettevillenc.com

Hellebore heaven

Hellebores (*Helleborus*), often called Lenten rose or Christmas rose, lend interest and color to the winter and early spring garden, when few other perennials are in bloom. The petal-like sepals provide the color (including shades of purple, pink, creamy white, pale yellow or green) and the nodding, cup shape. They remain attractive on the plant for months. Add to that their tolerance of dry shade and scant moisture (once established), and these perennials are a must for the all-season garden. They have attractive, leathery, usually evergreen leaves with a solid reputation for being unpalatable to deer. Hellebores may re-seed abundantly, which is a bonus since they can be pricey. Though seedlings of hybrids likely won't resemble the parent plant, they are lovely in their own right. Check out www.hellebores.org for a wealth of information and a photo gallery.

Project FeederWatch

You're not the only one interested in your garden's bird feeders and its visitors. Cornell Lab of Ornithology and Bird Studies Canada want to know how many birds are at your feeders. In a few days, thousands of backyard birders across North Carolina (and the rest of the United States and Canada) will become "citizen scientists." You, too, can participate.

During Project FeederWatch, you count the types and numbers of birds at your feeders for two consecutive days during the period of Nov. 8 to April 3, then submit data online (preferred) or on paper. It doesn't matter if you see only "common" birds like cardinals or doves. All the collected data is important. "Being a FeederWatcher is easy and fun and at the same time helps generate the world's largest database on feeder-bird populations," says project leader David Bonter. You can also submit photos and observe what your neighbors are reporting.

To learn more and to sign up, visit www.feederwatch.org, or call the Cornell Lab toll-free at (800) 843-2473. In return for a \$15 fee, you'll receive the FeederWatcher's Handbook, a poster identifying the most common feeder birds in your area, a calendar, complete instructions and the FeederWatch annual report, "Winter Bird Highlights." The participant fees help support this non-profit effort.

Regardless of whether you sign up, the Web site has plenty of free, helpful information, such as a "Tricky Bird ID" section, which helps you identify species that are confusingly similar—such as the house finch and purple finch and the black-capped chickadee and Carolina chickadee.

The shape of trees


The shape of a tree's crown is often overlooked when homeowners are considering what species to plant. But this characteristic is an integral part of a tree's charm and suitability in the landscape. Trees have a wide variety of shapes—oval, rounded, columnar, pyramidal, weeping and V-shaped,



An ant's-eye view of this Lenten rose reveals delicate speckling on the undersides of the sepals.

to name a few. The shape not only influences the overall aesthetic of the tree, but also determines the type of shade it provides. The Arbor Day Foundation has a very helpful online guide (www.arborday.org/trees/treeguide/browseTrees.cfm) that includes comprehensive information and photos for 200 shrubs and trees, including their shapes. The Right Tree in the Right Place (www.arborday.org/trees/righttreeandplace/size.cfm) is a comprehensive planning guide to tree planting.

Hort Shorts

- ▶ When deciding how close to the house to plant a tree, consider the tree's mature size. The Arbor Day Foundation recommends the following guidelines for spacing from the outer wall of a 1-story building: Large trees (70 feet or taller), at least 20 feet away; medium trees (30–70 feet), at least 15 feet away; small trees (30 feet or less), 8–10 feet away.
- ▶ When purchasing bark mulch, be sure it has a fresh, earthy smell. Sour mulch indicates poor preparation and storage and contains substances that can be harmful to plants. If you open a bag and it smells like vinegar, ammonia or sulfur, return it to the place of purchase.
- ▶ Don't fertilize perennials at this time of year. They need to ready themselves for winter dormancy. 



Carla Burgess can be reached at ncgardenshare@mindspring.com.

For more gardening advice, go to the "Carolina Gardens" section of www.carolinacountry.com.



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What You Need to Know
 USDA is working to keep "bird flu" (avian influenza – AI) and exotic Newcastle disease (END) out of the country. They are contagious viral diseases that can infect many types of birds.

LOOK FOR SIGNS OF ILLNESS
 Watch for signs of disease or unexpected deaths among your birds.

REPORT SICK BIRDS
 Call your local cooperative extension office, veterinarian, State Veterinarian or USDA Veterinary Services toll free at 1-866-536-7593.

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Energy Costs for Consumers Soar

The cost of residential energy use in the most recent report by 10.8 percent from May, the biggest increase in the report. The price of electricity, which rose in June, was the main driver of the overall increase.

Power bills have been rising for the past several months. The cost of fuel, Con Ed said, has risen about 22 percent.

Over the past year, the price of natural gas has risen in demand for the winter and propane industry has collected along the northeast.

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Skylights add natural light and reduce lighting bills

Most often, people install skylights for aesthetic reasons such as making a room appear larger than it is or providing a view of nighttime sky. Actually, adding skylights to a room can significantly reduce the need for lights. When I first installed a 4-by-4-foot skylight in my family room, it was so bright, whenever I would leave the room, I would reach over to switch off the overhead light, which was not on.

Lighting is a significant consumer of electricity in most homes, so if adding skylights can reduce your need for electric lights, they will also reduce your electric bills. The skylights must be efficient or they lose or gain (in summer) more heat energy than they save in electricity. A skylight is basically just a window cut out of a well-insulated ceiling, creating an insulation void.

Another advantage of natural lighting is that human sight is still better under natural sunlight than under artificial light at the same intensity (called "lux level"). If you have problems reading my article in the morning under a standard kitchen ceiling light fixture, you may find it easier to read under natural light from a skylight. Colors also look much more true and vibrant (called "color rendition of light") under natural light as compared to light bulbs. Some of the newer full-spectrum compact fluorescent bulbs do a better job of simulating true sunlight.

Skylight design, from efficiency, style and convenience standpoints, has come a long way in the past decade or so. Today, nearly all the super-efficient true-glass glazing and frame options that are available in high-quality new windows are also available in skylights. The primary difference is the top layer of multi-pane skylight glass is made from tempered glass for safety. Some of the hurricane-resistant skylights, which meet Florida's strict safety codes, use laminated glass similar to a car's windshield.

When selecting one, first decide whether you want a venting or a fixed type of skylight. Fixed ones are somewhat less expensive but they do not provide ventilation, which can reduce your cooling costs and improve indoor air quality. The new weatherstripping seals make the venting ones virtually as energy efficient and leak-free as fixed ones. Nearly all the traditional skylight designs are available as either venting or fixed models.

If you ever use natural ventilation, even if for only a few weeks during spring and fall, selecting a venting model is your most energy efficient choice. With the skylight located in the ceiling where the warm, less-dense air collects, opening it can create a natural breeze throughout your home. Most venting models are hinged on one end and the entire top of the skylight opens. Some commercial models, which can be used on homes, slide open instead of lifting.

For the most convenience, a remote control electric operator can be installed. It uses a small amount of electricity and requires electrical wiring. Automatic rain sensors can be installed to close the skylight in case of a storm. Unless



This bedroom uses a combination of one venting and two fixed skylights. Mini-Venetian blinds are installed in the gaps between the multipanes.

there already is an electric light in the ceiling, running new wiring may make the installation project too complex for the average do-it-yourselfer to tackle. For most installations with typical-sized skylights, I recommend a removable, long hand crank. It takes less than a minute to hook on the crank, open the skylight and remove the crank.

The heart of a skylight is the glazing (glass or plastic), and this has the most impact upon its energy efficiency. If you want efficiency with a good view of the sky, a multi-pane flat glass skylight is best. I even added a magnetic clear acrylic storm window under my low-e, argon-gas glass skylight for greater efficiency.

Since skylights tend to get dirty and covered with water spots, some manufacturers now offer special glass. It is as energy efficient as other glass options, but it has a super smooth titanium dioxide coating on the exterior pane surface. When the sunlight shines on it, it dries with very few spots and less dirt.

If you just need additional natural lighting, a double- or triple-pane domed plastic skylight is adequate and less expensive than glass. Also, the domed top is somewhat self-cleaning when it rains. Some types of plastic naturally block most of the sun's fading ultraviolet rays. In hot climates, consider a tinted skylight to block some summer heat and glare. ☼

James Dulley is an engineer and syndicated columnist for the National Rural Electric Cooperative Association.

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Duo Tater Bake

- 4 pounds russet or Yukon Gold potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 3 pounds sweet potatoes, peeled and cubed
- 2 cartons (8 ounces each) spreadable chive and onion cream cheese
- 1 cup (8 ounces) cream cheese
- ¼ cup shredded Colby-Monterey Jack cheese
- ⅓ cup milk
- ¼ cup shredded Parmesan cheese
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon pepper

Topping:

- 1 cup (4 ounces) shredded Colby-Monterey Jack cheese
- ½ cup chopped green onions
- ¼ cup shredded Parmesan cheese

Place russet potatoes in a Dutch oven and cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and cook for 15–20 minutes or until tender.

Meanwhile, place sweet potatoes in a large saucepan; cover with water. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat; cover and cook for 15–20 minutes or until tender. Drain; mash with half of the cream cheese and sour cream and all of the Colby cheese.

Drain russet potatoes; mash with the remaining cream cheese and sour cream. Add the milk, Parmesan cheese, salt and pepper; mix well.

Spread 2⅔ cups russet potato mixture into each of two greased 11-by-7-by-2-inch baking dishes. Layer with 4 cups sweet potato mixture. Repeat layers. Spread with remaining russet potato mixture.

Bake, uncovered, at 350 degrees for 15 minutes or until heated through. Combine topping ingredients; sprinkle over casseroles. Bake 2–3 minutes longer or until cheese is melted.

Yield: 2 casseroles (10 servings each)

Pumpkin Cheesecake Dessert

- ¾ cup finely chopped walnuts
- ¾ cup graham cracker crumbs (about 12 squares)
- ¼ cup sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon ground ginger
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cloves
- ¼ cup butter or margarine, melted

Filling

- 2 packages (8 ounces each) cream cheese, softened
- ¾ cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup cooked or canned pumpkin
- ½ teaspoon ground cinnamon, divided
- 2 tablespoons chopped walnuts



In a bowl, combine the first six ingredients; stir in butter. Press onto the bottom of an ungreased 10-inch tart pan with removable bottom.

In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese and sugar until smooth. Add eggs, beating just until blended. Add pumpkin and ¼ teaspoon cinnamon; beat on low speed just until combined. Pour into crust; sprinkle with walnuts and remaining cinnamon.

Bake at 350 degrees for 35–40 minutes or until center is almost set. Cool on wire rack for 1½ hours. Refrigerate until serving.

Yield: 9–12 servings



Crescent Topped Turkey Amandine

- 3 cups cubed cooked turkey
- 1 can (10¾ ounces) condensed cream of mushroom soup, undiluted
- 1 can (8 ounces) sliced water chestnuts, drained
- ⅔ cup mayonnaise
- ½ cup chopped celery
- ½ cup chopped onion
- 1 tube (4 ounces) refrigerated crescent rolls
- ⅔ cup shredded Swiss cheese
- ½ cup sliced almonds
- ¼ cup butter, melted

In a large saucepan, combine the first six ingredients; heat through. Transfer to a greased 2-quart baking dish. Unroll crescent dough and place over turkey mixture.

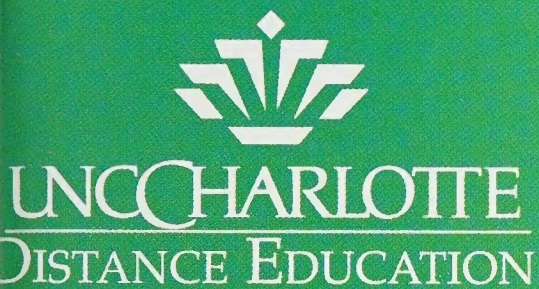
In a small bowl, combine the cheese, almonds and butter. Spoon over dough. Bake, uncovered, at 375 degrees for 30–35 minutes or until crust is golden brown and filling is bubbly.

Yield: 4 servings

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